

# EVENSONG

KATHARINE TYNAN

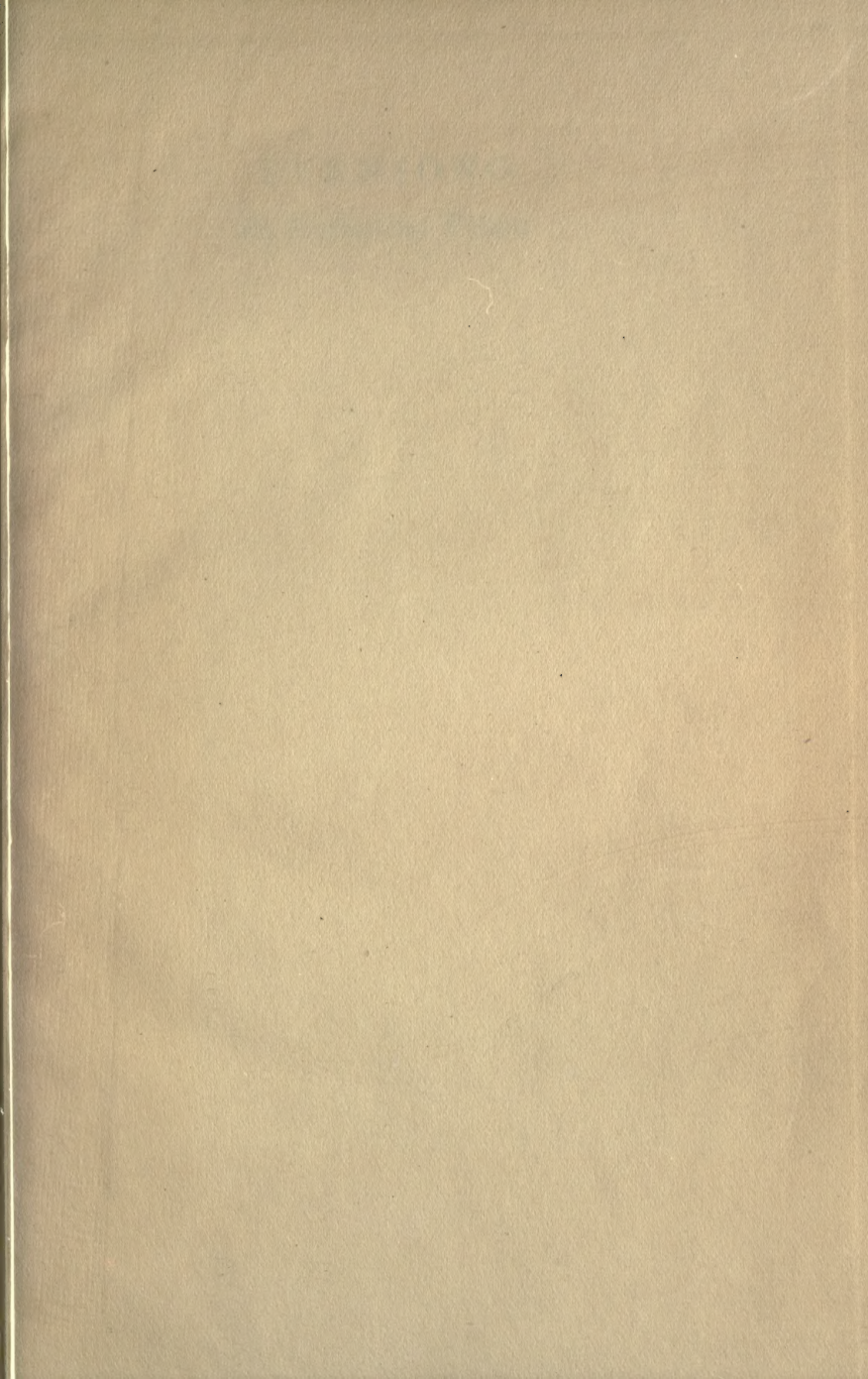
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By Katharine Tynan

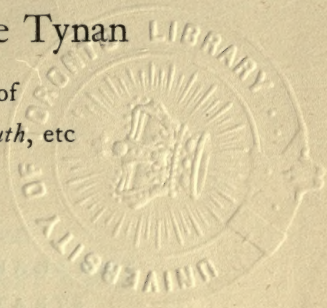


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# EVENSONG

By Katharine Tynan

Author of  
*Flower of Youth, etc*

A circular library stamp from the University of Oxford. The outer ring contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD" at the top and "LIBRARY" at the bottom. The center features a heraldic crest with a shield, a cross, and a crown, surrounded by radiating lines.

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*To Her Friend*

ROBERT VANSITTART C.M.G.

*also of*

*The Singing Caravan*

## CONTENTS

|                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| The Childless Woman    | Page 9 |
| The First Thrush       | 11     |
| Curfew                 | 12     |
| Holiday                | 14     |
| The Secret             | 15     |
| Mayo                   | 16     |
| Sponsa Dei             | 17     |
| Fiat                   | 18     |
| The Ass of Heaven      | 19     |
| The Blue Maids         | 21     |
| The Morning Fields     | 23     |
| The Little Things      | 25     |
| Rebels                 | 26     |
| Via, Veritas, Vita     | 28     |
| Golden Evening         | 29     |
| Dove's Weather         | 31     |
| The Light on the Water | 32     |
| Gorse in Ireland       | 33     |
| Peace                  | 34     |
| The Companionship      | 35     |
| The Message            | 36     |
| The Wayside Bank       | 37     |
| After Drought          | 39     |
| Thanksgiving           | 40     |
| The Call               | 41     |
| Last Year              | 42     |

## CONTENTS (*continued*)

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| She asks for New Earth        | page 43 |
| She asks for a House          | 44      |
| In May                        | 46      |
| Winter Morning                | 47      |
| St Luke's Summer              | 48      |
| Ad Filium                     | 49      |
| The Trust                     | 50      |
| A Woman                       | 51      |
| The Court of the Lord         | 53      |
| In Time of War                | 55      |
| A Song of Christmas           | 56      |
| The Purblind Praises the Lord | 57      |
| Personalia                    | 59      |
| The Two Voices                | 60      |



## THE CHILDLESS WOMAN

THE children she had missed,  
That never yet had birth,  
Unwarmed, unfed, unkissed,  
Soured all her joy of earth.  
But when her day was done  
And none was desolate,  
Dusty and all alone,  
She knocked at Heaven's gate,  
Birds from a parapet  
Called to her clear and shrill;  
With 'Mother! Mother!' so wild and sweet,  
And they were never still.  
They were no birds at all  
But children small and bright;  
When she came past the high wall  
They were as birds in flight.  
One was clasping her hand;  
One was hugging her gown;  
The littlest one of all the band  
She lifted nor set him down.  
Her hungry heart and cold  
Was filled full and to spare:  
One had her feet to hold,  
One was kissing her hair.  
The heart in her side  
Forgot the ancient wrong:

THE CHILDLESS WOMAN

When 'Mother! Mother! Mother!' they cried,  
It soared like a bird's song.  
Her arms were full of children,  
As they were birds in nest.  
The littlest one crept softly in,  
So he lay on her breast.  
God's people passing by,  
They smiled at her heart's ease;  
'The mother of many children,  
Her flowers grow to her knees.'  
They dance, they laugh, they run,  
She laughs with them at play;  
Their pleasures are not done,  
Nor their sweet holiday.  
When they lie down at night,  
Soft pillows, downiest beds,  
Her arms are full of her birds bright,  
Dark heads and golden heads.  
She draws them close to her,  
Lest haply it should seem  
That the new life in some wild fear  
Was a dream—but a dream.

## THE FIRST THRUSH

THE thrush begins again,  
In the stripped and listening tree,  
The old immortal pain,  
Rapture and ecstasy.  
Ah, when we were together,  
Love, how we thrilled to hear  
The voice of the Spring weather,  
The wild hope, the wild cheer!  
The heart that used to spring  
To some strange joy before  
Lies now a wingless thing,  
Not to be cheated more.  
Dear, by what groves you fare,  
What waters of Paradise,  
What glory of ambient air  
Floods your amazed eyes,  
O when your first birds call  
Clear from the heavenly hill,  
You will remember all  
The wild hope, the wild thrill.  
Love, you will know full well  
What yet I do not know,  
That the thrush tried to tell  
In earth's fields long ago.

## CURFEW

**I**T'S very sad the country  
That used to be so gay;  
There's little traffic on the road  
Betwixt the night and day.  
But through the long gold evening  
There's never a creel nor cart.  
The silence of the country  
Puts fear into my heart.  
Still in the long, gold evening,  
When nothing passes by,  
The blackbird's shouting his maddest song,  
His heart is proud and high.  
The cattle in the pastures  
They might be painted things;  
There's not the barking of a dog,  
But the free bird has wings.  
The men and women and children  
They creep into the dark,  
The houses show no lights at all  
For a star in the mirk.  
The gay and the sweet country  
Her heart is cold with fear,  
And only the ghosts go walking  
With feet you may not hear.  
The sun springs up in splendour,  
All in the dewy morn,

### CURFEW

There's no one going the market road  
Between the fields of corn.  
Only the blackbird's fluting  
So gay, so wild, so loud,  
The blackbird whistles the finest tune  
Of all the feathered crowd.  
All in the ominous quiet  
He's drunken with his song;  
Through the delicious dawns and eves  
He whistles loud and strong.  
The country listens and listens  
Her heart is sore afeard;  
The blackbird singing his maddest song  
Plucks Death by the beard.

## HOLIDAY

ABOUT my window in a wreath  
Pink roses yield their spiced breath  
So close that I can see and know  
The very way that roses grow  
From the pink shoot upon the stem  
Unto the fullest diadem.  
All night the fragrant dew and cool  
Lies like a little silver pool  
About the corncrake's feet; he stalks  
By emerald and by amber walks,  
And is ensilvered by the moon  
From his grey head to his grey shoon.  
The wood-dove croons me into rest;  
Night has a soft and dreamless breast;  
The cuckoo hales me wide awake  
From the far hill, the distant brake,  
Shouting his cuckoo call in showers  
Over my bed as it were flowers.  
In the dear evening quietness  
The blackbird the sole brawler is,  
Keeping the bowers awake and all  
The wild wood merry at evenfall  
With his Good Night Now, drawled and plain!  
Good Night Now, over and over again.  
Such quietness on vale and hill,  
Such skies of rose and daffodil,  
And primrose and the sleepy folk  
Wrapped in the silence as a cloak.  
'Broidered with roses small and close.  
My dreams are drenched with attar of rose.

## THE SECRET

**I** CARRY my hidden joy with me by country and city,  
And none guesses the little joy that stirs at my heart,  
Nor that she sings so low to herself her secret ditty,  
Of how the days and hours run out that keep us apart.  
For it's you, it's you, I'm wanting still through the weeks and  
days;  
And the thought of you is troubling me yet when I sleep  
or wake,  
And the hunger for you turns hard for me the softest ways,  
And the sweetness of honey is bitter to me for your darling  
sake.  
O my soft and my dreaming Love, in your mists and shadows  
It is you keeps calling me home again from the feast and fair,  
You by your silver hills and vales and your dew-drenched  
meadows,  
And your eyes grey as the water is and your silken hair.  
Although this land is beautiful, sure, and the people kind,  
They never know the heart of me that is ill at ease,  
Sick for the silk-soft rains of you and the crying wind,  
And the grey skies leaning over you and your mountains  
and seas.  
The milky breasts of you, Rosaleen, and the mouth of honey,  
The mother eyes of you, Silk o' the Kine, dewy and mild,  
And the quiet heart of you, Kathaleen, that is dark and sunny,  
Draw me home to rest with you, in your arms—a child.

## MAYO

THERE'S a wide sea flowing and a deep river going  
    Betwixt you and me, Mayo,  
And there's no bridge over, and past all recover  
    Are the days of long ago.  
But O it's dear you are, and O it's fair you are!  
    As I go to and fro  
I see the great skies of you: the fall and rise of you  
    Are like my heart, Mayo!  
Your great skies arching and your mountains marching,  
    Like Kings to the sea they go;  
Croagh Patrick & Nephin have scarce their like in Heaven,  
    O the grandeur of your mountains, Mayo!  
The wind from the ocean comes with a wild commotion  
    Over bogs I used to know;  
Rose and bronze and azure, like a great King's treasure  
    The colours of your bogs, Mayo.  
Was I ever fretful, of your beauty forgetful,  
    Were the days ever sad and slow,  
When he and I together, walked in the wild weather,  
    Your roads and your fields, Mayo?  
There's a blue sea by Achill and a long heather hill;  
    My heart keeps sighing soft and low;  
But we'll never come again in the sun and in the rain  
    Over your shining plains, Mayo.

## SPONSA DEI

**T**HE Lamb of God! Yea, Mary, and thy Lamb!  
Ran with thee as the lamb beside his dam;  
He leaped, He played, fed full, He grew and throve  
In milky fields and pastures of thy love:  
His little feet the cowslips washed with gold,  
The dews, the winds were tender: heat and cold  
Softened for Him who bade them be, Earth smiled.  
The sun, the stars, loved Him, the growing child.  
When thou didst lean above His cot at night  
To listen for His breathing, soft and light,  
Two other Eyes grew soft in love and joy,  
Marked how He throve and doated on the Boy:  
The Eyes for which Archangels veil the face,  
The unsleeping Lamps of Heaven, in that mild space;  
The Eyes of God, the Father, smiled upon  
The dewy slumber of the little Son.  
When He was sick and all thy lullabies  
Could bring no assuagement to His aching eyes—  
(But did He ail as other children do?)  
Was there not One who shared thy watch and knew  
The pangs of parenthood and its great fears?  
Was He who turns the planets and the spheres  
Fearful and troubled, all His joy undone,  
For a sick Child, His own and Mary's Son?

## FIAT

**W**HATEVER grief the day may bring,  
What sorrows may be on the wing,  
My heart be Thy burnt-offering!  
Whatever face be at my door  
Long-dreaded and long-awaited for,  
I open—to Thy servitor.  
Whatever feet be on the hill  
Bringing what tidings cold and chill,  
I bow my heart unto Thy will.  
I bare my bosom to the sword.  
Strike then! beloved not abhorred  
Who striketh in the Name of the Lord.

## THE ASS OF HEAVEN

**I**F I WAS like St Francis,  
As no such thing am I,  
I'd give to folk of Heaven  
A name to call me by,  
The Ass of Christ, my haster  
In lands beyond the sky.

If I could bear as meekly  
Stumbling up-hill my load,  
As he, my four-foot brother,  
Innured to curse and rod,  
'Twould not so ill unseem me  
To be the Ass of God.

If I could stand so patient,  
In scourging wind and rain,  
And bear so uncomplaining  
The bitter ways of man;  
To be the Ass of Heaven  
Would be my glory then.

But I, so cold, so froward,  
So fain of my own will,  
Hating the load I carry,  
Aware of every hill!  
Make me like this small brother,  
Kind and forgiving still!

THE ASS OF HEAVEN

If like this honest brother  
I bore the blame and shame,  
The Cross between my shoulders  
To show Whose ass I am,  
The folk of Heaven might hail me  
The Ass of Christ by name.

## THE BLUE MAIDS

**I**N the haunted woods of Abbeyleix  
The Blue Maids are at play;  
The brown earth's gotten a purple fleece  
For their sweet holiday.

And all around is holy ground  
And blue and violet weather.  
The Blue Maids, in gavotte and round,  
They are touching hands together.

'Tis Flora and her wanton crew,  
So slim, so young, so fair,  
All in their kirtles of the blue,  
The blue snoods on their hair.

Multitudes, multitudes of girls;  
Of dancing they are fain.  
The blue is hiding their eyes and curls,  
Flora and her wild train.

They have shaken the violet kirtles free  
Blue, purple, lavender,  
The green is out on hill and lea,  
Yet blue's your only wear.

Under the trees they meet together,  
They pirouette and walk.  
In purple and the azure weather  
They curtsey as they talk.

## THE BLUE MAIDS

Multitudes, multitudes, they come  
Between the night and day.  
This wood has gotten an azure foam  
For the white foam of May.

The quiet stars on their hill-tops  
They lean and look and wonder;  
The green fire's running on wood and copse,  
But there's a blue flame under.

All through the heavenly nights and days  
The Blue Maids tread a measure.  
The gorse has litten a golden blaze  
For to illume their pleasure.

Too soon, too soon, the days will pass,  
And these sweet girls will lie  
Quietly under the green silk grass,  
Their dancing all laid by.

The old, old trees of Abbeyleix,  
They have seen this sight before,  
When the earth gets a purple fleece  
For the Blue Maids' dancing floor.

## THE MORNING FIELDS

I LOOKED from my window  
At peep of day:  
The fields were sleeping  
In the mist and grey.  
So fast their slumber,  
They never stirred,  
Though from the coppice  
Piped the first bird.  
So strange their faces  
As the cold light grew;  
They might be spirits  
Of the fields I knew.  
The pale light breaking  
Over the hill,  
Streaked with cold amber  
And the daffodil,  
Waked not these sluggards;  
Nor Chanticleer,  
Winding his horn  
For the folk to hear.  
But when in his splendour  
The sun leaped high,  
They stretched and opened  
One drowsy eye.

THE MORNING FIELDS

The fields of morning,  
    Withdrawn, apart,  
Were cold as Winter  
    To my frightened heart.  
So far in dreaming  
    They had wandered, strayed;  
For one chill moment  
    I thought them dead.

## THE LITTLE THINGS

THE foolish and the trivial things  
And not the great at all  
Trouble me with their barbéd stings  
Until the salt tears fall.  
Not the unkind word that I spoke,  
The love-word left unsaid,  
Not these, not these my poor heart broke  
When that my love was dead.  
But just a turn, a look, a word,  
Not memorable even,  
Set in my heart a sudden sword  
Yea, Mary's swords and seven.  
When in the dusk I sit alone  
And hug my secret smart,  
The little things lie like a stone  
Upon my grieving heart.

## REBELS

FROM these high upland fields the Lark  
Goes travelling to a Heaven aglow;  
And who shall bid the adventurer mark  
Curfew was struck an hour ago?  
The Blackbird rollicks in the grove  
And laughs to think of folk in bed,  
Nor fears a hand not laid in love  
On his smooth nape, his burnished head.  
The Thrush—and who would tell the Thrush  
On such delicious eves to creep  
Into his nest in the privet-bush?  
Good lack: there's all the dark to sleep!  
The Cuckoo with Cuckoo will mock  
And flit a little further still;  
He only keeps the Cuckoo-clock,  
And that is set at golden still.  
Even the gamin sparrow will take  
His dust-bath in the dangerous way;  
And see,—the meandering corncrake  
After official end of day!  
For who shall bid the sun down-sink  
Before his appointed time, my Lords?  
These rascals break your laws, I think  
These most disloyal, rebelly birds.

REBELS

'Tis only piteous human kind  
In stuffy tenements must grieve  
The birds but turn the eye that's blind  
On curfew, without 'By your leave.'  
From these high upland fields survey  
A world where no man stirs, poor man!  
To their own laughter, wild and gay,  
They romp at 'Catch me, if you can!'

## VIA, VERITAS, VITA

I AM the Way!—Thou said'st: the Way  
By which my laggard feet must run,  
Ford rivers, climb the mountains, yea:  
What matters so the road be won!  
'I am the Truth.' By which I live;  
Hardness made easy, dark things plain.  
Steadfast to Thee, not fugitive,  
Thou guidest me in the night and rain.  
'I am the Life.' Beyond Death's wall  
I shall lay hold of Life and taste  
Such floods of Being that not all  
Eternity runs out, lays waste.  
My Way! Although the shards be rough—  
My Truth! Unchanging, brightening still.  
My Life! O soul, drink deep enough!  
Feed full upon some heavenly hill!

## GOLDEN EVENING

NOW God be praised because He gave  
This wonderful golden evening bright.  
Gold on the world breaks as a wave,  
Gold wings and feathers in full flight.  
A gold cloud wraps the purple hill,  
Soft as gold down or golden hair,  
With crocus gold and daffodil  
Now cloth-o'-gold's your only wear.  
Gold now are humble water-brooks,  
And gold the covering of the tree,  
And gold are all the browsing flocks  
The moth, the late home-coming bee.  
The crow has a burnished head: he flies  
A dark flame on the living light;  
And gold are all the children's eyes  
That will not close this golden night.  
Killiney Hill's the bluest grape,  
Filled with the golden living wine;  
And see the Head's majestic shape.  
Streaked with the gold and opaline.  
And Howth is gold and rose: the sea  
Is golden water, and the ships  
Their masts are gold and ivory,  
And gold the windless ensign dips.  
The dusky cloud carries the fire,  
Streaked with pale flame her umber brown;

GOLDEN EVENING

Gold as the bird upon the spire  
The thrush forgets her speckled gown.  
O the transfigured world dies off!  
The enchanted evening pales and dies!  
But some have walked in Paradise grove  
And seen the streets of Paradise.

## DOVE'S WEATHER

THE day is a dove: she is preening an ash-grey feather:  
The mountains have plumage of blue as wood-  
pigeons use.

Hark to her choir! the wood-pigeons moaning together  
Make a soft music hid in the golds and the blues.

There 's a flash of a rainbow on sea & woods: she is turning  
In the pale sun her irised bosom and crest.

The dew-drenched grass is her mirror; the mist of the  
morning  
Shot through with her burnished colours: the glint of  
her breast.

The day is a dove: her wings drop Peace as a raining,  
Soft drift the orange and gold from the tree as she moves.  
She broods o'er the world that rests at last uncomplaining  
Under her wings and her eyes, the colour of doves.

## THE LIGHT ON THE WATER

**T**HE light on the water is there the livelong day,  
For God is just behind the cloud and never far away.  
And what 's the beauty of water and earth and sea and sky  
But a mirror flashed to Paradise to comfort hearts thereby?

Our God is not forgetting us although He veils His face.  
The light on the water flows from the Secret Place.  
Our God is bending o'er us though we may not see Him  
plain.

The light on the water 's a silver-falling rain.

It veils the Holy of Holies, the light that 's never still,  
Wrought with the rose and pomegranate, violet, daffodil.  
A pillar of light before Him; a pillar of light behind,  
The light on the water moves like a silver wind.

I have come home so gladly to the beauty, kind, and mild.  
The light on the water: the Voice that calls, 'My Child!'  
A pillar of light before me from which the shadow flees,  
The light on the water: the Voice that whispers, 'Peace!'

## GORSE IN IRELAND

ALL the sweets of all the honey-bells  
Gathered to a flask or pomander,  
All the gold of honey-dropping wells,  
Spice and amber, oil and nard, were there.

Walls of gold beside the purple bay,  
And a thousand thousand golden bees  
Rifling honey through the golden day,  
Clogged in honey to the thighs and knees.

Birds sang low and loud in a hid house,  
Dew and honey in the shaken rain.  
O the speckled throats in the green boughs!  
Half 'twas ecstasy and half 'twas pain.

As we walked between the golden walls,  
The brown cliff ran over living gold;  
Golden rain and golden waterfalls  
Tumbling down to sands, sober and cold.

All the browns and tawnies, deep and bright,  
Of a golden pansy clad the hill,  
Nor were peacocks' colours out of sight  
Nor forgotten orange and daffodil.

Sweet the day was, a sweet pomander,  
Gathered from the East, all nard and spice,  
Blown upon by every honeyed air,  
And the golden world was Paradise.

## P E A C E

**T**HOUGH all joy of life be done  
Who cares? so the dearest one  
Laughs in the sun, plays in the sun.

Your heart's love and my heart's love,  
Walking in a Paradise grove  
And the eyes of God above.

Come up hither, look with me!  
On the pleasant green country,  
Birds and flowers and waving tree.

Here the days go slow and dim  
Lacking him and wanting him:  
Life goes quicker than a dream.

Your heart's joy and my heart's joy  
Set above care and annoy,  
Golden boy and golden boy.

So that it goes well with these  
Love and Joy and sweetest ease,  
Who cares if the world 's amiss?

In the light and ambient air  
Groves and fields beyond compare.  
O, they walk there, see they walk there!

## THE COMPANIONSHIP

**G**OD goes with me everywhere I go,  
So the joy of Him is never far  
Like the Spring's breath o'er a waste of snow,  
Like in blackest night the clearest star.

O the thought of Him 's a water-spring  
In a parched land cracked with dusty heat;  
Like green pastures where the dear birds sing;  
There my Shepherd guides my stumbling feet.

O my God is dew in the starved day,  
Manna to the hungry soul and sick.  
God goes with me on the difficult way,  
And the thorn 's a-flower, the dead is quick.

Still His hands reach out lest I should slip,  
Still His voice speaks comfort to my ear.  
In our close, our dear companionship  
There 's but room for love and none for fear.

O my God forgets not: He is kind;  
He comes closer when the way is rough;  
Shelters me against the bitter wind.  
O my God is Love and love 's enough.

## THE MESSAGE

TO the house of the widow,  
Where she wept alone,  
There came a kind woman  
To the cold hearthstone.  
*God touches His own*, she said,—  
*God touches His own.*

Her tears fell so softly  
Without sigh or moan:  
*God touches His own*, she said,  
'*Tis well with His own.*  
*What is grief? What is Death?* she said—  
*God touches His own.*

In the desolate Winter day  
Ere she was gone  
She turned once again to say  
At the threshold stone  
*What is life? What's the world?* she said,—  
*God touches His own.*

The wind from over the bogs  
Like an echo blown  
Brought back the word she had said:  
*God touches His own.*  
*What is grief? What is Death?* she said,—  
*God touches His own.*

## THE WAYSIDE BANK

WITH primroses gentle  
She did her bedight,  
Lovely was her mantle  
With green and white.

The freck'ed gold cowslip  
Did her adorn  
With daisies that open  
Their eyes at morn.

The blue of the speedwell  
Made her sweet eyne.  
Her cheek did the wild rose  
Incarnadine.

With honeysuck and clover  
And woodruff pale,  
Embroidered over  
Was her beauty's veil.

The road goes past her  
In dust and heat,  
Faster and faster  
Go the wheels, the feet.

With roar and rattle  
They leave her behind,  
The people, the cattle,  
They are deaf and blind.

THE WAYSIDE BANK

But all night thorough  
    She sleeps in sweet dark,  
Till from the furrow  
    Springs up the lark,

She bathes in Maydew  
    Her morning face:  
No flaunting garden  
    Shall **her** surpass.

And many a traveller  
    Who goes the way  
Keeps a green thought of her  
    For the dusty day.

## AFTER DROUGHT

THE rain gropes with delicate pushing fingers  
At the dry lips of the small things, dying of pain  
Gives of her breast. 'Twas but dream! She tarries  
and lingers.

The thirsty death is upon them. Hasten, O Rain!  
It is no dream, little sisters! Her white foot passes,  
Plashing in water sweeter than honey-dew.  
Take heart, O slender ones, all ye flowers and ye grasses  
The river of life is running for you and you.

Fainting and dying, the cattle in bone-dry pasture  
Dream in a mirage of water up to the hocks.  
Hope, little brothers? The glint of her white, wet vesture  
Cheats you no longer. Hark to the water-brooks!

Earth's sick children, the old and the fevered bodies  
That had no rest for the fierce heat and the drouth,  
Ask: Is it she? the beloved, the life-giving goddess?  
Her wet hands in the hair, her kiss on the mouth.

Ring out, ye garden bells, from a fairy steeple;  
Canterbury bells and harebells shake all the towers,  
Because our God wills not the death of the people,  
Because His Rain comforts this earth of ours.

Because the glad streams are running by hills & valleys,  
Because the springs are filling; the wet wind blows,  
The draught of life flows fast from a brimming chalice,  
The world 's as sweet as a rose: a rain-wet rose.

## THANKSGIVING

AT last the ravening wind is still,  
No fierce beast at the window-sill  
Howls and shakes bars. O world at ease,  
I praise God for the quietness!

But is this he, this heavenly day,  
Comes singing up the seaward way,  
A young Lamb in a dew-drenched fleece?  
I praise God for the quietness!

So many nights of windy wars,  
The great procession of the stars  
Swayed like a swarm of golden bees.  
I praise God for the quietness!

The sea, who has drowned many men,  
Goes singing her sleepy song again,  
Rocking her dead upon her knees.  
I praise God for the quietness!

O, now the thrush is not afraid  
Tossed in the wind as a green glade,  
To chant his madrigals and glees.  
I praise God for the quietness!

For all dear souls that have enough  
Where the storms cease and rains leave off,  
Safe from the bitter and scourging seas,  
I praise God for the quietness!

## THE CALL

AT night when I lie fast asleep  
A little voice cries at my ear:  
Quick—'Mother! Mother!' and I leap  
Out of my dreams and wild with fear.

Whether 'tis you, dear Heart's Delight,  
Sleeping some few small rooms away,  
Calls to me in the lonely night  
I cannot think, I cannot say.

Or if it be a boy's quick call  
From East or West in some sore need:  
Dear angels, guard the outer wall  
Lest that my prayers have little speed.

Or if the dead have need of me,  
The piteous babes that lie alone,  
That only oped an eye to see  
Into the world ere they were flown.

I know not: only this I know,  
The quick call would have power to wake  
Me in the grave and bid me go  
Running for some scared darling's sake.

## LAST YEAR

WAS it last Summer, just last year,  
Or many and many a year ago,  
Our hearts went shadowed by that fear?  
Now Time and Space are darkened so  
It might be fifty years since then,  
And, Love, our boys are home again.

So long since we two bore that strain  
And shook for what the day might bring!  
And now our boys are home again,  
'Scaped from the bitter and dreadful thing.  
You will not turn, Love, to rejoice,  
Even for the boys, Love, the safe boys!

So long, Love, since you went away,  
And yet the laggard year's not spent!  
Our boys are here, Love, brave and gay;  
It is so long, Love, since you went.  
If but this year were gone, who knows  
What flower of hope might bud, what rose?

Only last year! So wide, so deep  
The river runs 'twixt now and then.  
Here is the feast of joy to keep,  
Since, Love, the boys are home again.  
But, dim in darkness lies last year  
And the New Year, Love, the New Year!

## SHE ASKS FOR NEW EARTH

**L**ORD, when I find at last Thy Paradise,  
Be it not all too bright for human eyes,  
Lest I go sick for home through the high mirth—  
For Thy new Heaven, Lord, give me new earth.  
Give of Thy mansions, Lord, a house so small  
Where they can come to me who were my all;  
Let them run home to me just as of yore,  
Glad to sit down with me and go out no more.  
Give me a garden, Lord, and a low hill,  
A field and a babbling brook that is not still,  
Give me an orchard, Lord in leaf and bloom,  
And my birds to sing to me in a quiet gloam.  
There shall no canker be in leaf or bud,  
But glory on hill and sea and the green-wood  
There, there shall none grow old but all be new,  
No moth or rust shall fret nor thief break through.  
Set Thou a mist upon Thy glorious sun  
Lest we should faint for night and be undone,  
Give us the high clean wind and the wild rain,  
Lest that we faint with thirst and go in pain.  
Let there be Winter there and the joy of Spring,  
Summer and Autumn and the harvesting,  
Give us all things we loved on earth of old  
Never to slip from out our fond arms' fold.  
Give me a little house for my desire  
The man and the children to sit by my fire  
And friends crowding in to us, to our lit hearth  
For Thy new Heaven, Lord, give me new earth!

## SHE ASKS FOR A HOUSE

**J**OSEPH, send me a house,  
For the dear sake of Nazareth,  
Where the Child in the breast of your spouse  
Drew quiet and radiant breath.

Where as you went to and fro  
Between the bench and the door,  
The little Son's feet, soft and slow,  
Made prints on the dusty floor.

Joseph, send, of your grace,  
A wee little house for my ease,  
In a green and a sheltered place,  
With a hive for the honey-bees.

The sound of the cattle a-browse,  
The song of the lark and the linnet,  
The flowers to cover the house,  
And the peace of God to be in it.

Send me a warm hearth-stone,  
And the things that I love about me.  
A wee little house of my own,  
And none to trouble or flout me.

And there, as I sit by the fire,  
Remembering all that is past,  
I shall make to my heart's desire  
A wee little song to the last.

SHE ASKS FOR A HOUSE

The praise of the Child shall be in it.

The thought of Mary, your spouse,  
And, Joseph, listen a minute;  
Your name, if you give me the house.

Joseph, lean now and hear,  
The roads of the world are stark,  
Lonesome and strange things to fear;  
Cover my head from the dark!

Safe out of the rain and wind  
I shall be glad, though I'm old,  
Singing a song of you, Kind,—  
Who gave me a house from the cold.

## IN MAY

LOVE, might we have that dead May over again!  
The wet leaves and the lilac in the rain.  
Dear and familiar things,  
Rain on the blackbird's wings.  
After the drift of tears, after the pain.

How wild the blackbird was that wet May weather,  
And we under the ivy housed together!  
The lilac 's out and sweet,  
The warm dusk drenched with it.  
Wild was the blackbird's song, and we together.

Love, in your Paradise do you forget  
The long road and the lilac in the wet,  
The blackbird, with wet wings,  
Singing immortal things?  
Oh, Love, remember, Love, remember yet!

## WINTER MORNING

(Brookhill 1918)

THE stars faded out of the paling sky,  
Dropped through the waters, but the Morning Star  
Grew brighter and brighter, and as day was nigh  
A pure wind troubled the rushes near and far.

No bird was yet awake: only the duck  
Homed to the little lake, fed full with streams:  
Strange and unreal the full morning broke  
On a still world as God saw it in dreams.

The still-life, austere world was grey and cool,  
Lit by one burning torch of purest flame.  
Home, from what hidden haunt, what secret pool?  
Borne on the morning wind, the wild duck came.

## ST LUKE'S SUMMER

THIS is St Luke, his Summer: you shall see  
The Spirit of Summer flit by hill and lea.  
The Earth turns from her dying to rejoice  
Thinking the Spring comes, from the robin's voice  
She takes to be the thrush's. Oh, she is young  
She was but dreaming she was old so long.

This is St Luke, his Summer: silver of mist  
Covers the mountains, shot with amethyst.  
The heat lies in the valleys: sheep and kine  
Are glad deep down in opal and sapphirine.  
Cool dews about their feet and springing grass  
They think: How like a dream the Winters pass.

The bee goes questing for honey in amaze  
To find so few flowers in the golden ways  
And all the trees barred like himself in gold.  
He thinks Winter a story that is told,  
So pale the Summer goes like a sweet ghost  
A little while before the nipping frost.

## AD FILIUM

THE day you did not come God set  
A broken rainbow in the sky,  
A promise for her whose eyes were wet  
For the lost hope, the joy put by.

That never the flood should overwhelm  
His children but He gives an ark  
That His own hand is at the helm  
That His own face is in the dark.

That never a dearest hope is lost,  
But a new hope is born again;  
That life stirs in the winter frost.  
And a clear shining after rain.

The day you did not come there grew  
A lunette into Heaven that gave  
The pledge of you, the promise of you,  
*How should your mother not be brave?*

## THE TRUST

THOU wilt not fail me! Rather than fail,  
Thou wouldst move mountains: Yea, I trust,  
Terror and doubt shall not prevail  
Against Thy promise, Thou, August!

Rather than cheat my simple faith  
Thou wouldst move Heaven & Earth & Space,  
Divert the Sun from his high path  
And shake the planets from their place.

Behind the embroidered curtain wrought  
Of the earth's beauty and the skies',  
Thou hidest Thyself, but quick as thought,  
I follow Thee, surmise, surprise.

Thou art in the enlivening sun at noon,  
And in the over-arching sphere,  
And in the dew and the wind's tune,  
Thou art everywhere, and Thou art here.

The fool to his own heart hath said  
There is no God! Oh, fool, be dumb!  
See what a mighty Hand hath stayed  
Me when the ravening floods were come.

*No God!* But He is here! His love  
Is under me and over me.  
No olive leaf is here: no dove:  
I walk with Him the amazed sea.

## A WOMAN

**H**ER curled and rosy beauty  
So shining was,  
The heart went crying and sighing  
That it must pass.

With the gold and the silver  
She did adorn her:  
The heart went weeping and weeping  
As it did mourn her.

Like apple-blossom and clove-pink.  
Her white and red;  
God when He made her colour  
Laughed as He made.

Little gold head of curls  
Shining and bright of her;  
God when He made her hair  
Took delight of her.

Tall as a poplar tree,  
Slight as a spear,  
Graceful as a young swan  
On a still mere.

All so harmless her beauty,  
Innocent, mild,  
Like a young lamb in the pasture,  
Like a young child.

A WOMAN

With the rose and the scarlet  
She did bedeck her;  
Radiant as a new rose  
Fresh from the Maker.

All so dewy, so tender,  
Her beauty was,  
The heart dropped tears in the silence  
That it must pass.

## THE COURT OF THE LORD

**O** BUT to think we may crowd in,  
Pilgrim on pilgrim, without fear,  
Find Thee alone with the Seraphin,  
Come close and whisper in Thine ear.

Nor fear to be an unwanted guest,  
For all day long Thou wilt not tire  
But listen to the least request,  
Giving past hoping and desire.

And yet, poor fools, we will not come.  
The wind turns in at the open door;  
The bird, the bee are here at home.  
The sunlight dances on the floor.

The Invisible Ones with a still face  
Abase their wings as at a throne  
Else in the rich, the fruitful place,  
Thou art alone, Thou art alone.

And still Thou longest that Man should ask,  
And still Thy treasures are all his  
Thy wine, Thy oil, shall fill his flask;  
He walks in plenty to his knees.

Has he a wound of body or soul  
Thou touchest his evil: it is well.  
The King touches and he is whole,  
Go! show the priests—a miracle!

THE COURT OF THE LORD

Man, lo thy Banker! art though poor,  
Purse bare, thy treasury a sieve?  
He can fill up, renew thy store  
And all thy griefs heal and forgive.

And yet so long is He alone,  
No one comes nigh Him while He waits  
With all His benefits undone,  
Nor sound of footsteps in His gates.

## IN TIME OF WAR

NOW to the stable shall come in  
Not Kings nor the King's peers,  
But the poor people washed clean  
With dropping of slow tears,  
Because their dearest hopes are slain  
And Love lies in the night and rain.

There shall come in the fatherless,  
The childless here shall come,  
For widowed lovers on their knees  
The singing folk make room.  
For pity of all those tears there shall  
No singing stars make festival.

This night no herald from the sky  
Shouts down his glorious mirth.  
Tears, as the rivers now run dry  
Have drenched the bloodied earth.  
There is no cheer for to be found  
But in this plot of holy ground.

Draw near and let Him bind your sore  
And feel the virtue flow.  
By the King's touch made whole once more  
Poor folk who suffered so.  
Now on the Child's breast shall be laid  
The world's grief as one tortured head.

## A SONG OF CHRISTMAS

THE Christmas moon shines clear and bright;  
There were poor travellers such a night  
Had neither fire nor candle-light.

One plucked them stars out of the sky  
To show the road to travel by;  
So that the Ass go warily.

She had all Heaven safe in her hold,  
Hidden within her mantle's fold—  
All Heaven, and It was one hour old.

Her hair under, over Him spread  
His spun-gold coverlet and His bed,  
Twined with His little golden head.

She sang and rocked Him to-and-fro  
Such songs as little babies know,  
With Lullaby Sweet, and Lullalo.

He had no need of moons and suns,  
Nor the gold-crested bird-legions,  
Singing their lauds and orisons.

The Christmas moon shows a cold beam;  
He hath His Mother, she hath Him:  
Together they sleep, together dream.

## THE PURBLIND PRAISES THE LORD

THEY cannot know, the keen of sight,  
The lovely things I see.  
I praise the Lord both day and night  
That He remembers me.

I see the tree in its new leaf  
A burning bush of green;  
Green beyond wonder and belief  
Its soft and silken sheen.

I cannot see the birds in boughs,  
But an enchanted choir  
Sings all day long in a hid house  
Of emerald flame and fire.

I cannot tell where hills leave off  
And where the clouds begin:  
Such mountains, Alp on Alp, above,  
No eye hath ever seen.

Pink blossom on the apple-branch  
For me's a rosy bower—  
The cherry tree an avalanche  
Of snow-white flower on flower.

My distant candle's misted round  
With gold and glittering air,  
An angel with a glory crowned  
Upon the heavenly stair.

THE PURBLIND PRAISES THE LORD

I miss the common and the dull,  
The small detail of things,  
And only keep the beautiful,  
The stars, the flowers, the wings.

I see the faces that are dear,  
The others they may pass.  
I thank my God I see not clear  
But dim, as in a glass.

Yes, though the world should slip from sight,  
And I no more should see,  
I'll praise my God both day and night  
That He remembers me.

## PERSONALIA

**I** WAS *born under a kind star*  
In a green world withouten any War;  
My eyes opened on quiet fields and hills,  
Orchards and gardens, cowslips, daffodils,  
Love for my rising-up and lying-down,  
Amid the beautiful pastures green and brown—  
The rose leaned through my window set ajar—  
*I was born under a kind star.*

In a green land without hunger and drouth,  
God gave a gift of singing to my mouth,  
A little song and quiet that was heard  
Through the full choir of many a golden bird;  
As a little brook in grasses running sweet,  
Full of refreshment for the noontide heat.  
Some came and drank of me from near and far  
*I was born under a kind star.*

I was fed full with bliss past my desert.  
And when grief came was comfort for my hurt,  
I had long nights of sleep that had no ear  
For the struck hours, the shrilling Chanticleer.  
My days were busy and glad from day to dark,  
My heart leaped high and merry with the lark.  
I shall die young though many my years are—  
*For I was born under a kind star.*

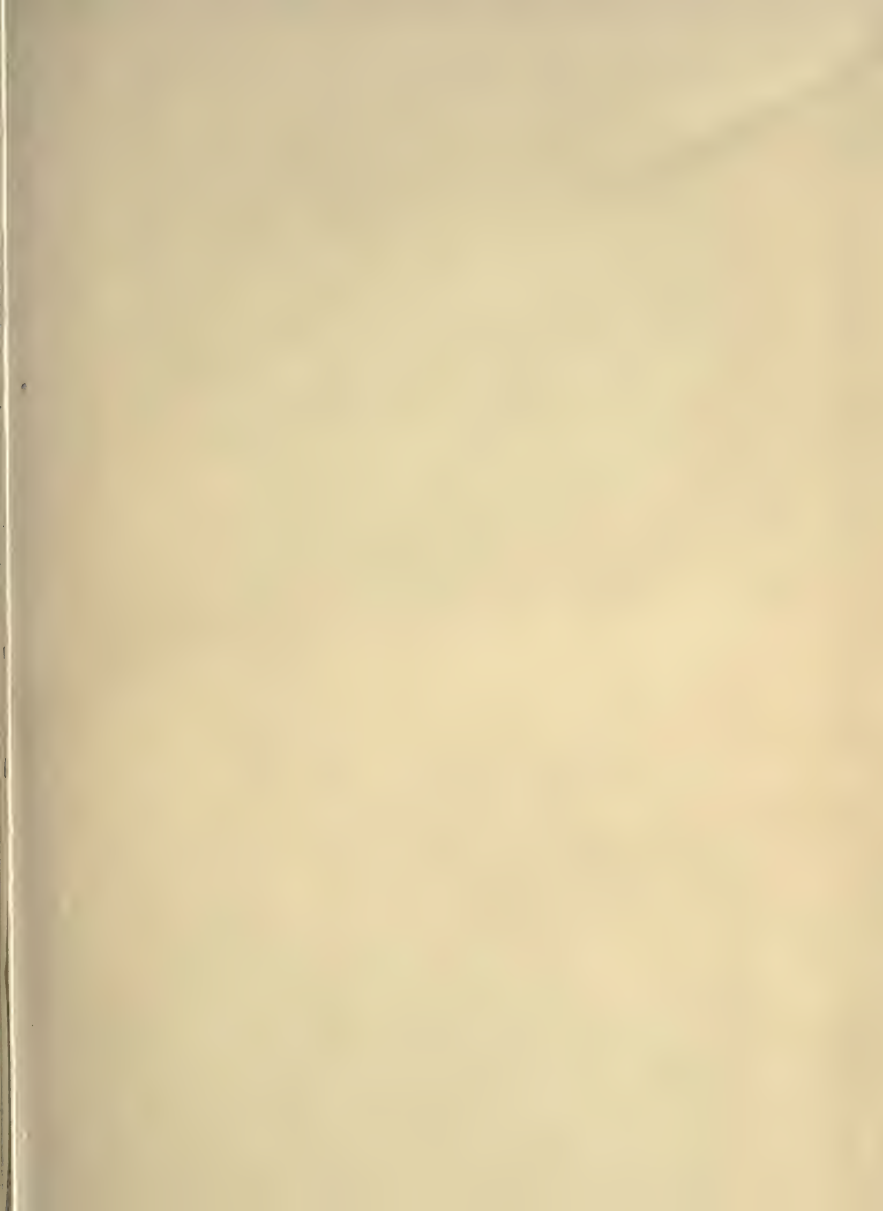
## THE TWO VOICES

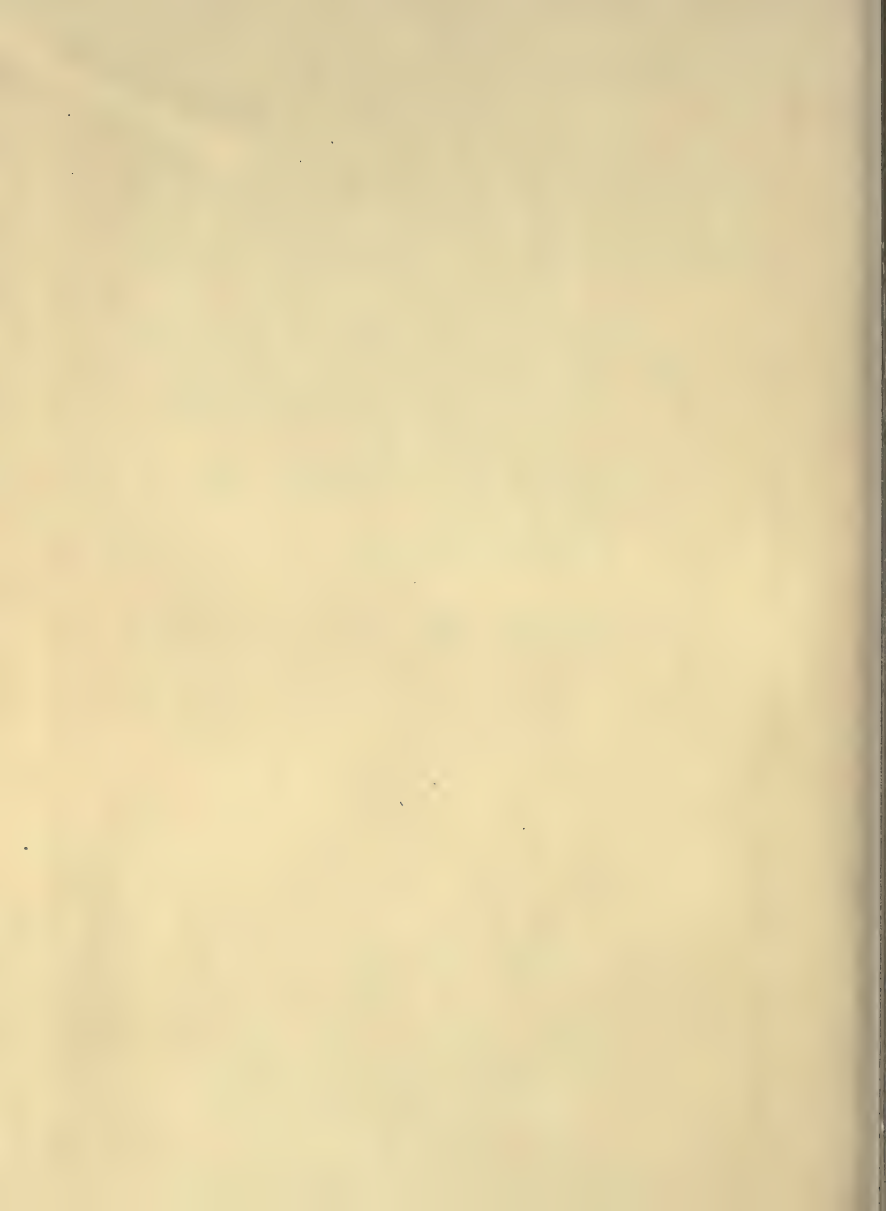
THE night darkens fast and the shadows darken;  
Clouds and the rain gather about mine house.  
Only the wood-dove moans—hearken, O hearken!  
The moan of the wood-dove in the rain-wet boughs.

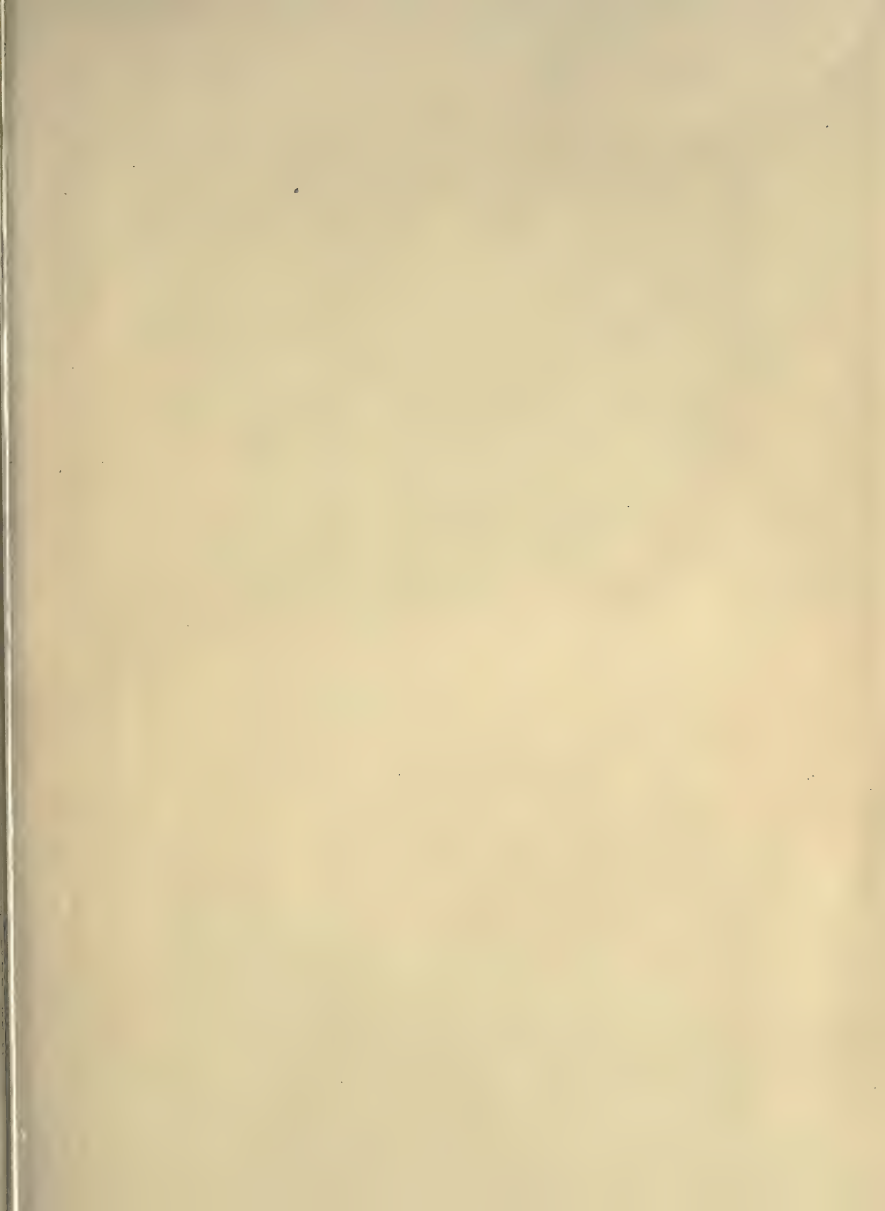
*Loneliness and the night! Night is not lonely.  
Star-crowned the night takes to a tender breast,  
Wrapping them in her veil these dark hours only,  
The weary, the bereaved, the dispossessed.*

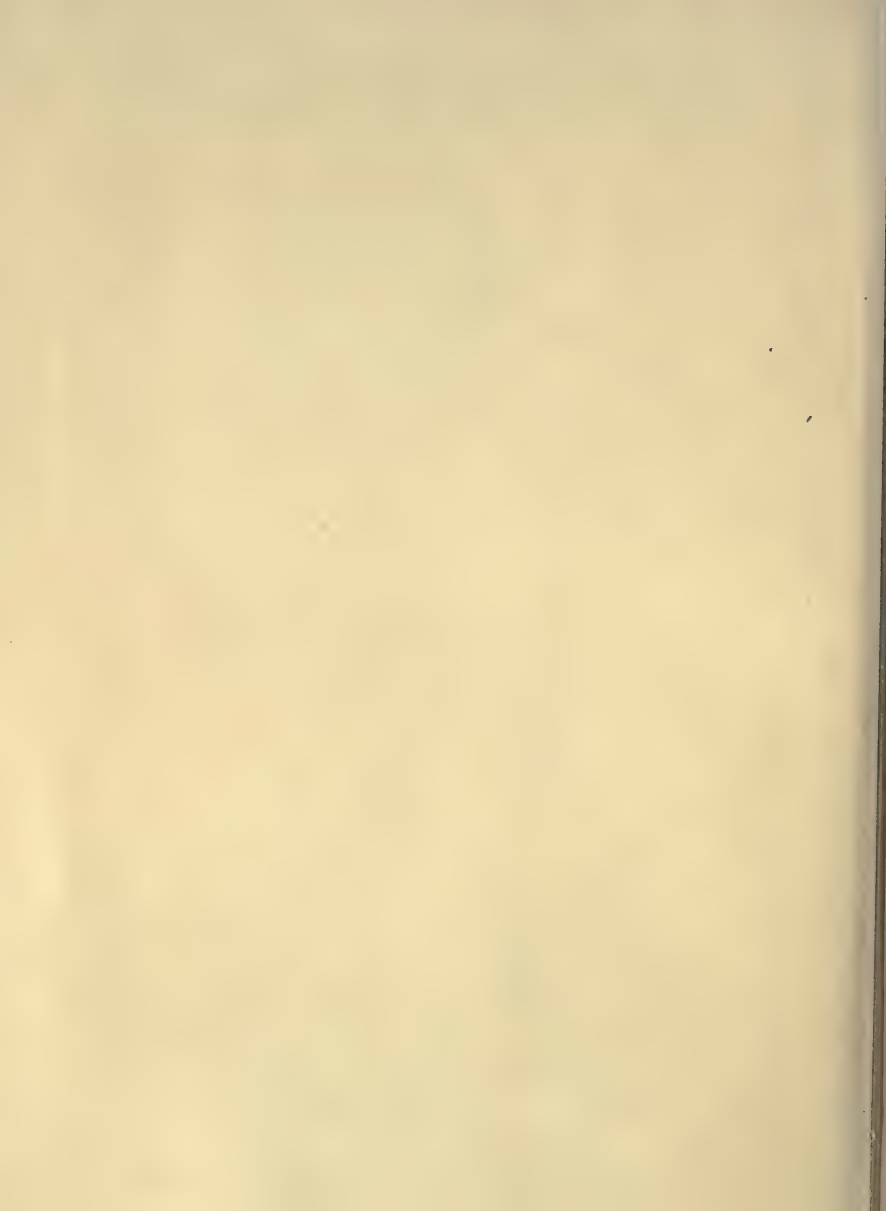
When will it lighten? Once the night was kindly  
Nor all her hours went by leaden and long.  
Now in mine house the hours go groping blindly  
After the shiver of dawn, the first bird's song.

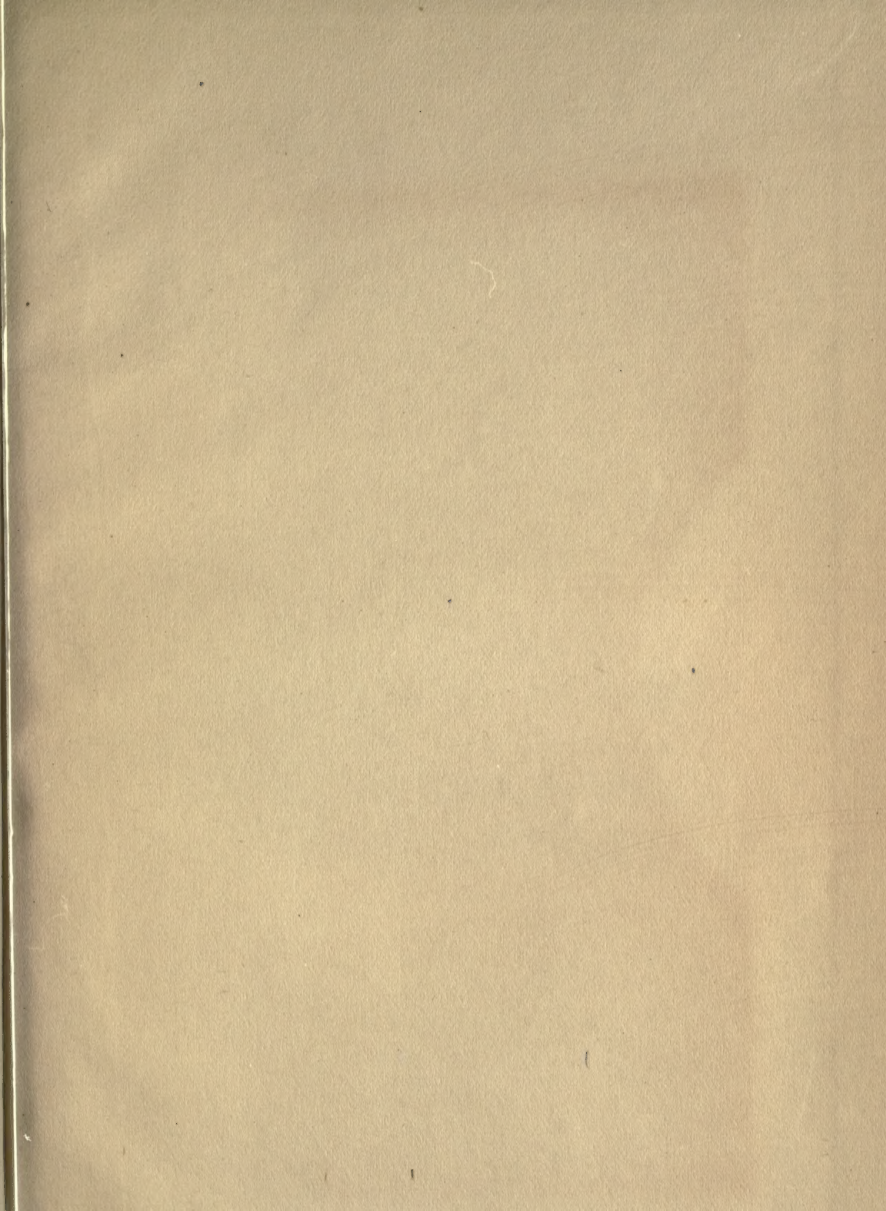
*Sleep now! Be still! The night with wings of splendour  
Hides heavy eyes from light that they may sleep,  
Soft and secure under her gaze so tender,  
Lest they should wake to weep, should wake to weep.*













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Hinkson, Katharine (Tynan)  
Evensong

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